

Title

"SomnAmbulist NVMe SSD — Bought Because the Label Caught My Eye!"

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1. Packaging and Initial Impressions

I recently purchased the SomnAmbulist NVMe SSD (256 GB), known for its dragon-themed 2.5-inch SATA version, but this time as an M.2 NVMe model. Despite being less affordable than the SATA versions normally discounted on AliExpress, the NVMe version's flamboyant label—far more eye-catching than the simpler tones of the SATA version—hit me immediately. When Black Friday deals dropped the price into the 1,800 yen range, I decided to go for it.

The SSD arrived from China with minimal damage. The blister pack-style packaging features the same over-the-top dragon design, and while it resembles previous WALRAM packaging, this one includes a space for a screw. There's no seal, so it can be freely opened.

On the back, the packaging continues with the same flashy design. Specs list "Read: 2600 MB/s, Write: 1600 MB/s," and there's mention of a 3-year warranty. It's clearly marked as "Made in China."



When I removed the SSD from its backing—an act I enjoyed because the design is just that cool—I noticed the label was a bit crooked, but that wasn't a problem since I planned to peel it off anyway.

With the label removed, there's just one integrated controller/NAND chip, and it bears a Micron logo. Searching "J2215" revealed that it corresponds to Micron's MTFDHBL256TDQ-1AT12AT chip from the 2100AI/AT series (64 GB to 1 TB model range). It's surprising to find Micron-branded chips in a budget SSD! The datasheet shows TLC NAND with about 2000 MB/s read—not blazing fast—so perhaps it's inexpensive to procure. This suggests that the "Read: 2600 MB/s" on the packaging for the 256 GB version may not be accurate.

2. Performance Testing

I installed the SSD into my usual test machine, a ThinkPad X1 Carbon (5th Gen), carefully reattaching the label straight.

In BIOS, it appeared as “MTFDHBL256TDQ,” the exact chip model, with no indication of OEM obfuscation. Perhaps it’s a factory second or repurposed device.

Once Windows installed, CrystalDiskInfo triggered a loud alert—not from the SSD itself, but because the default temperature warning threshold is set at 60 °C. The drive was already at 63 °C! After refreshing, the temperature dropped below 60 °C.

Moving on to CrystalDiskMark for performance measurement:

- **Package claims:** Read 2600 MB/s / Write 1600 MB/s
- **Micron official spec:** Read ~2000 MB/s / Write ~1000 MB/s (likely more realistic)

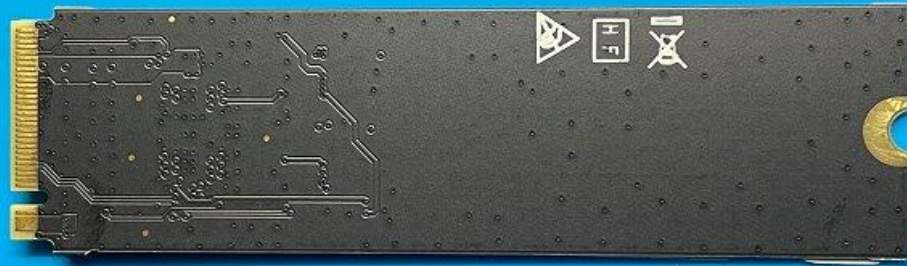
However, measured write speeds were shockingly low—only in the 300 MB/s range—even in repeat tests.

Recalling the earlier temperature alert, I suspected thermal throttling. Indeed, logs showed the drive was running hot, though it hadn’t issued an SSD warning itself.

Following the approach I used before with the Samsung SSD 980, I attached a heatsink (0.5 mm copper plate + 0.5 mm thermal pad), removing the label again to do so.

After installing the heatsink, CrystalDiskMark showed write speeds jumping into the 900 MB/s range—bringing both read and write closer to Micron's official specs! Log data also indicated a temperature drop of over 20 °C, strongly suggesting that heat had been throttling performance.





3.



Summary

I bought the SomnAmbulist NVMe SSD because of its striking label, and while the performance is modest—as expected for a budget SSD—the design really delivers on visual appeal. It's cool enough that I'll probably put it back in its blister pack for display.

What's most interesting is that it may actually be a bona fide Micron SSD underneath all that flair. But as usual, I'll refrain from digging too deeply and just enjoy it for what it is.